

forwardly and downwardly, the cover members being affixed to each other at lowermost sections of the respective front portions.

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17. (Unchanged) The marine outboard drive as set forth in Claim 16, wherein the recessed area includes a pair of recessed portions that are disposed on opposite sides of the housing, the mounting mechanism includes a pair of mounting assemblies, each mounting assembly is disposed within one of the recessed portions, and each cover member is configured to cover the mounting assembly disposed within the respective recessed portion.

18. (Unchanged) The marine outboard drive as set forth in Claim 16, wherein the front surfaces of the cover members meet with each other in front of the steering shaft.

19. (Unchanged) The marine outboard drive as set forth in Claim 18 additionally comprising an elongated member, the housing including a lower portion, the steering shaft being tubular, the elongated member extending through the steering shaft and beyond a bottom end thereof into a lower portion of the housing, the front portions of the cover members defining a space in front of the steering shaft, at least a portion of the elongated member extending through the space.

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B2 20. (Amended) The marine outboard drive as set forth in Claim 19, wherein the lower portion of the housing includes a horizontal section extending generally horizontally and below the steering shaft, the horizontal section defines a first aperture under the steering shaft and a second aperture forwardly of the first aperture, and the elongated member extends through the second aperture.

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21. (Unchanged) The marine outboard drive as set forth in Claim 19, wherein the elongated member is a cable.

22. (Unchanged) The marine outboard drive as set forth in Claim 21, wherein the cable includes at least one electrically conductive wire.

23. (Unchanged) The marine outboard drive as set forth in Claim 21, wherein the cable is a speedometer cable.

24. (Unchanged) A marine outboard drive comprising a housing having an outer surface and at least one recessed area lying next to a portion of the outer surface and being recessed relative to the portion of the outer surface, a tubular steering shaft pivotal about a steering axis, at least one mounting mechanism disposed in the recessed area and coupled to the steering shaft and to the housing, an elongated member extending through the steering shaft and beyond a bottom end thereof into a lower portion of the housing, and cover members configured to lie generally flush with at least the portion of the outer surface of the housing, each one of the cover members having a front portion coupled with each other to define a space in front of the steering shaft, at least a portion of the elongated member extending through the space.

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B3 25. (Amended) The marine outboard drive as set forth in Claim 24, wherein the lower portion of the housing includes a horizontal section extending generally horizontally and below the steering shaft, the horizontal section defines a first aperture under the steering shaft and a second aperture forwardly of the first aperture, the elongated member extends through the second aperture.

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26. (Unchanged) The marine outboard drive as set forth in Claim 24, wherein the elongated member is a cable.

27. (Unchanged) The marine outboard drive as set forth in Claim 26, wherein the cable includes at least one electrically conductive wire.